A
True Diſcourſe,
Of the practiſes of *Elizabeth Caldwell*, Ma: *Ieffrey Bownd*, *Iſabell Hall* widdow, and *George Fernely*, on the parſon of Ma: *Thomas Caldwell*, in the County of Cheſter, to haue murdered and poyſoned him, with diuers others.

Together with her manner of godly life during her impriſonment, her arrainement and execution, with *Iſabell Hall* widdow; As alſo a briefe relation of Ma. *Ieffrey Bownd*, who was the Aſsiſe before preſt to death.

Laſtly, a moſt excellent exhortorie Letter, written by her own ſelfe out of the priſon to her husband, to cauſe him to fall into conſideration of his ſinnes, &c. Seruing likewiſe for the vſe of euery good Chriſtian. Beeing executed the 18. of Iune. 1603.

VVritten by one then preſent as witnes, their owne Country-man, *Gilbert Dugdale.*

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AT LONDON,
Printed by Iames Roberts for Iohn Busbie, and are to be ſold at his ſhop vnder Saint Peters Church in Cornewell. 1604.

To the right vertuous, the Ladie *Marie Cholmſly*, & the right worſhipfull theſe Knights; Sir *Tho: Houlcroft*, Sir *Iohn Sauadge* of Egerton, Sir *Iohn Egerton*, Sir *Peter VVarborton*, Sir *Rowland Stanly*, Sir *Vrian Leigh*, Sir *Tho: Aſton*, Sir *Thomas Smith*, Sir *Tho: Sauadge*, Sir *George Leiſter*, Sir *VVilliam Damport*, Sir *Tho: Stanly*, Sir *George Booth*, Sir *Henry Bunberry*, Sir *Hukin Beeſton*, Sir *Richard Wilbrome*, Sir *Richard Brooke*, Sir *Richard Egerton*, Ma. *Peter Warborton* Eſquire, Ma. *Thomas Wilbrom* Eſquire, Ma. *Thomas Brooke* Eſquire, Maſter *Richard Graneſnor* Eſquire, Ma. *Hugh Calmelie* Eſquire, Ma. *Robert Cholmſly*, Eſquire, Ma. *Ralfe Egerton* of Ridly, Eſquire, Ma: *Thomas Marburie* Eſquire, Ma. *Richard Brerton* of Wetten-hall, Eſquire, and all the reſt, as well Knights as Gentlemen then at the Aſsiſes preſent, the true witneſſes of this following hiſtorie: your kind poore Countryman *Gilbert Dugdale*, engaged to you all in debt and dutie, committeth this diſcourſe with true and due commends: with continuall prayers for your good healths, and ſucceſsfull fortunes.

MOſt indered and right vertuous Ladie, and you the reſt of the right VVorſhipfull theſe kinde *Cheſhiere* Knights; After my long beeing at *Cheſter*, in the time of this reported trouble. I in my mellancholie walkes bethought me of the ſtrange inuaſion of Sathan, lately on the perſons of *Elizabeth Caldwell*, and her bloody louer *Iefferie Bownd*, together with that vntimely actor *Iſabell Hall* widdow, howe that vglie fiende (euer mans fatall oppoſite) had made practiſe, but I hope not purchaſe, of theyr corruptible liues, & brought them to the laſt ſteppe of mortall miſerie. And then revoluing with my ſelfe, the great goodnes of God, in calling ſinners to repentance, and withall, admiring his gifts in the penitent, I could no leſſe then write my harts trouble, as well to pertake the world with my meditation, as to make them vvonder at this *Cheſhiere* chaunce; and thereby to plant or to engraft a kinde of feare by this way of example, howe murder ſhould hereafter beare any braine in ſenſible creatures, conſidering how the very ſtones ſhal bewray the inward thoughts of maſſaker. All theſe conſidered, when I had coted this wonder, thinking how incredulous our Nation is in things true, and how vncertaine they are to beleeue fopperies fayned, I could no leſſe for the certaintie heereof, but call you to witneſſe of the proofe, becauſe ſith ſuch an example was preferd vnto vs, that others,

not eye witnes therevnto, might the rather aſſure themſelues of the ſame. Firſt, I knowing your generall griefes for the fall of ſo good a Gentlewoman, and when no remedy could be, to comfort ſuch a godly ſoule, aſwell in her time of impriſonment as at the houre of her death, my owne occaſions alſo for that time conſidered, and beeing your true and naturall Countryman, I could doe no leſſe but oſtend my dutious loue to you all in this kinde, deſiring you to accept my poore mite, onely conſidering this, the poore mans plenty is prayer to regrate your worthy loues, & as truly as I liue, that ſhall be no niggard; for that night wherein I lie me downe, and pray not for you all, let my reſt be broad-waking ſlumbers, and my quiet, waking dreames; and that will be puniſhment more then I would enioy for ſo regardleſſe a good as I ſo late and ſo happily receaued. True it is that diuers reports paſſed vp and downe the ſtreets of Loudon as touching this act of murder, but how ſcandelouſly, as fiue murdred, three murdred by the meanes of ſix perſons, which your VVorſhips know is falſe, only three murdered one; marry the intent was to him that now liues. Therefore being an eare-witnes to this falſe alarum, it made me more diligent in the ſetting foorth the truth, whereby G O D in his power might be knowne, ſathan in his meaning no doubt ouerthrowne, and the worlds idle fabling by a contrary meaning knowne. For as it was, it was, and no otherwiſe, and thus it was, as your preſences both at the examination, arraignement, and execution can iuſtifie; and how odious it is to heare any truth rackt by ſlaundering tongues, iudge or imagine; onely this, pardon my boldnes, witnes the right, accept my good will in the publiſhing; and ſo I commit you to Gods protection.

Your poore Countryman, euer
yours, *Gilbert Dugdale.*

The practise of *Elizabeth Caldwell*, against the life of her owne husband.

I purpose God willing to discribe in briefe, the life and death of Elizabeth Caldwell, late wife of Thomas Caldwell in the countie of Chester, and daughter to one Maister Duncalffe of the sayd countie; A gentleman of very good sort, who fatherly and carefully trained vp his daughter from her infancie, she being framed and adorned withall the gifts that nature could challenge, and wanting no good education, did in her tender infant yeares bestowe her in marriage; to the said Thomas Caldwell, giuing her a good dower to her better preferring in the sayd marriage; with a yearely newety of ten pounds, to extend to her said husband, and his heires for euer: and as the like matches doe not often proue well, so this Caldwell being young, and not experienced in the world, gaue his minde to trauell, and see forraine countries, which tended rather to his losse then profit, as also to the great discontentment of his wife, and other his friends, leauing her often times verie bare, without prouision of such meanes as was fitting for her, ý by these courses hee did withdrawe her affection from him, so ý in the continuance of his absence; a young man, named Iefferey Bownd, a neighbour vnto the said Elizabeth Caldwell, and she as I sayd before, inioying all the excellent gifts of nature, set his affections aboch, and being a man of good wealth, spared nether cost nor industrie both by himselfe & others,

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to withdrawe her to his vnlawfull desire, and omitting no opportunitie in this sute; though she along time withstood their allurements, insomuch that hee feede an old woman named Isabell Hall, late wife of Iohn Hall, and preferred as an instrument to worke her to an vnlawfull reformation, so that in processe of time, with many earnest perswasions, they wone this silly soule, to their will; and hauing so done, the sayd Bownds insatiable desire could not bee so satisfied, but perswaded her of himselfe, and also by the sayd Isabell Hall, to yeelde her consent by some meanes to murder her sayd husband, the which she was though drawne to the other, yet very vnwilling to agrée vnto that. But by many and often assaults and incouragements, their perswasions did worke with her, and tooke effect; the which being obtained, then were they as busie as before, deuising which way, to set their deuillish and most hellish practises aworke, preferring many deuises for the accomplishment thereof. And shee often times entring into consideration with her selfe, what a damnable part it was, first to abuse her husbands bed, and then in seeking to deprive him of his life, was greatly tormented in her conscience, and diuers times, earnestlie intreated them to surcease in this practise, laying before them the great and heauie punishments, prouided for such offenders both in this world, and in the world to come: but their harts being so deeply possest by that filthy enimy to all goodnes, that there was nothing to them more odious then such perswasions, still persevered in there former wicked inuensions, and drew her to associate them in this villany, laying many plots for the performing of it, amongst which Isabell Hall as she was verie expert in such like actions, beeing an ancient motherly woman, and to all mens iudgements in her outward habite, was farre from harboring such a thought, yet as I was about to say, she aduised Bownd to giue to a brother of hers, namely, George Fernley, fiue pounds, & she would perswade him, that he should vse some meanes to murder Caldwell, the which Bownd agreed vnto, being that to him all her motions

tions were medicines, and for that her house was the place, that Bownd and Elizabeth Caldwell did resort for there meeting place, and he hauing an intent to further this matter, caused this Fernley to be sent for, and conferred with him: and hee being a man slenderly furnished with meanes, agreed to this there motion, affirming, that he would delay no time till hee had effected their desire, though in my conscience hee pretended nothing lesse, but onely to sooth them with faire words, for lucre of the money, made a shewe to Bownd as if he were verie diligent about the execution thereof, but still was preuented, in so much that Bownd entered into a great rage with the poore fellow, and swore most terribly, if hee did not dispatch his businesse withall expedition, he would lay him by the heeles for his fiue pounds.

Notwithstanding, hee made delaies so many, that the old for, I meane Halls wife deuised with her selfe of another course, & willed Bownd to buy some Ratsbane, and she would minister it in Oaten-cakes for that she knewe Caldwell much affected them, and they being made, his wife should giue them vnto him, and so procure his speedy dispatch. Which deuise he verie willingly consented vnto, and vsed no delay in the matter, but presently repared to a towne in Cheshiere called Knutsforth, there bought the poyson, and brought it to Elizabeth Caldwell, and wished her to send it to Isabell Hall with all speede, whereuppon she receiued it, and instantly vppon the receite thereof, Halls wife sent her maide to Elizabeth, and willed her to send the spice she spoke to her for: so the maide innocently went as her dame commanded her, and receiued the poyson, and brought it to the sayd Isabell Hall her dame, who presently did take it, and minister it, (as I sayd before) in oaten cakes: the which being done, she sent them to Elizabeth Caldwell, where she and her husband did soiourne, whereuppon, being in the euening, she layd them in her chamber window. In the morning next ensuing, Caldwell, as his accustomed manner was, rose verie earlie,

and his wife still keeping her bed, he spied the cakes lie in the windowe, and demaunded of her if he might take any of them, she answered, yea, all if he would, and therevpon he tooke some three or foure of them, and went into the house, and called for some butter to eate them with, the which was brought him.

But let me tell you by the way, so soone as he was departed the chamber with the cakes, feare draue such a terror to her hart as she lay in bed, as she euen trembled with remorse of conscience, yet wanted she power to call to him to refraine them, insomuch as he himselfe did not onely eate of them, but the most part of the folkes in the house, children and all, yet God bestowed his blessing so bountifully on them, as they were all preserued from daunger, sauing one little girle which could not so wel disgest them, which was a neighbours child of sixt or seauen yeares old, and comming in by chance for fier: to the which maister Caldwell gaue a peece of acake, and she eate it, and by reason she had beene long before visited with sicknes, shee went home and died presently, while the rest by way of vomit were saued. But that which maistar Caldwell did vomit vp againe, two doggs and a cat did eate, and they died presently also. Whether vppon the force of that poyson or no the childe died I cannot say, but well I knowe, they were all three brought within the compasse of murder for the death of it, and were all executed at Chester for the same fact, as you shall heareafter vnderstand.

Vpon the death of this child, Elizabeth Caldwell was apprehended, and brought before three Iustices of the peace; namely, Sir Iohn Sauage, Sir Thomas Aston, and maister Brooke of Norton, where before them she truly confessed all their practises and proceedings from the beginning, euen till that day. Vpon which confession, Bownd and Isabell Hall were apprehended, and brought before the same Iustices, and examined as touching the murder, and they very stoutly denied all, affirming that

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they were not guiltie to any such action, although her confession in her Examination did manifest against them, beeing layd to their charge: all which would not moone them to acknowledge their fault, the deuill hauing so great a commaund ouer them. Notwithstanding, they were all committed to the Castell of Chester, there to remaine without Bayll or Mainepryse, till they should be deliuered by due course of Lawe, according to the tenure of warrants directed in such a case.

So the Assise approching within few dayes after their commitment, their causes and tryall for that time was reiourned, till the next great Assises holden there. And whether it was by speciall meanes of Bownd made to the Judge, or for that Elizabeth Caldwell was with childe, I cannot truly say, but there they continued from that time, beeing a senight after Easter, till Michelmas following: during which time they were not admitted one to speake to another. And for Elizabeth Caldwell, from her first entrance into prison, till the time of her death, there was neuer heard by any, so much as an idle word to procéede out of her mouth, neither did shée omit any time, during her imprisonment, in seruing of GOD, and séeking pardon for her sinnes, with great zeale and industrie, continually meditating on the Bible, excluding her selfe from all companie, sauing such as might yéelde her spirituall comforts, as learned Diuines, and such, the faithfull seruaunts of God. There was many of all sorts resorted to sée her, as no fewer some daies then thrée hundred persons: and such as she thought were viciously giuen, shee gaue them good admonitions, wishing that her fall might be an example vnto them.

Thus the deceitfull deuill, who hath sometime permission from GOD to attempt the very righteous, (as Iob) was now an instrument to her sorrow, but her feeling faith the more increased, and no doubt to her comfort, though in our eyes terrible: for indéede so it ought, béeing sent from God as an example to thousands. For where so

many liue, one or two pickt out by the hand of God, must ſerue as an example to the reſt, to keepe thouſands in feare of Gods wrath, and the worlds terror. But ſee her conſtancie. All the time of her imprisonment, ſhe vſed all poſſible meanes, both of herſelfe, and by thoſe good members that did viſit her, to conuert all the reſt of the priſoners, which good worke begunne in her did take good effect, for ſhe ſent ſome dayes a dozen Letters to ſeuerall Preachers to be reſolued as touching her fayth, and the want of a ſound reſolution that GOD had parſoned her offences. Where the Lady Mary Cholmſly of Cholmſly amongſt others, together with the comfortable reliefe of one Maiſter Iohn Bartie, (no doubt both Gods Children) ſo relieued, as want neuer grieued her conſcience, but that ſhee continued in zeale, without griefe of the worldes offences both in ſoule and body: nay, not onely her, but alſo to the reſt of the priſoners. For note, that death neuer feared or daunted her, but onely fearing ſhée was not fully purged from her ſinnes, till at the end, as by her words at her execution appeareth.

This foreſaide Maiſter Bartie well deſerues a due remembrance for his clemencie and charitie ſhewed to that diſtreſſed and deceaſed poore ſoule, by whoſe good meanes, which in mere compaſſion by him extended, did not onely receiue comforts for her bodily releefe, but alſo great ſatisfaction for her ſoule, hee oft imployed ſuch induſtry to the Learned, both to repare vnto her themſelues, as likewiſe daily in ſending vnto her good and learned inſtructions: Surely, he deſerues to be regiſtred in the harts of all well diſpoſed perſons, and his demerits (no doubt) will finde reſtitution at the handes of him, who is the Pay-Maiſter for all ſuch charitable deſerts.

It is alſo to be noted, that after theſe thrée aforenamed perſons had remained in priſon all the whole Summer, at Michelmas then enſuing the Aſſiſes were holden, and Elizabeth Caldwell had her triall, where ſhee openly before the Iudges, and the reſt of the Worſhipfull Audience, acknow-

knowledged her offence: for the which shee first demaunded pardon at the hands of God, then of her husband, lastly of all the world: and desiring, as it was euer her prayer, that she might be as a Loking-glasse to all that eyther did see or heare of her fall, that by her they might see into theyr owne frailines, and the infirmities which are subiect to the flesh. And hauing, as I said, acknowledged her guiltines, was condemned. And by reason shee was not then deliuered of child, still reprieued: and at ỹ same Assise Bownd was indited: and whether by euill counsell giuen him, or for his owne obstinacie, I cannot truly report, but he would not answer to the Articles obieced against him, nor refer his cause to GOD and the Country, but stoode mute, though the Iudges very earnestly moued him to put his cause to triall: all which would not perswade him, and therefore, according to the Law, he was adiudged to be prest, receiuing his iudgement on the Saturday, to be executed on Munday following. And for Isabell Hall, her matter that Assise was not called in question, which yelded her such incouragement, that shee was altogether regardlesse of the good of her soule.

But Bownd, euer before he perceiued how hes should spéede, pleaded to euery one whom he had any communion with, of his innocencie, till he saw no hope of life: then hée, before two or thrée Preachers, and others, did manifest the whole truth, and affirmed that flesh and blood was not able to endure the often assaults that Elizabeth Caldwell had of him, and Isabell Hall: and vppon the Munday about nine of the clocke, was prest: where to euery mans iudgement there present, hee made a very penitent end, béeing hartily sorrowfull for his offences, and very deuoutly craued pardon of GOD and all the world, and so died (I trust) the true seruaunt of Iesus Christ.

Then that night next after his death, Elizabeth Caldwell was deliuered of a boy, which child is yet as I take it, still liuing with another boy she had before her imprisonment, the which are at the keeping of Caldwell their

father, and as it was generally reported, hee made suite to the Iudge to procure a warrant to haue his wife executed, within a certaine time after her deliuerie; but how true it was that he made such meanes, I cannot truly affirme, but sure I am, a warrant was granted and sent the keeper for to haue her executed, within 13 daies or thereabouts after she was deliuered, the which was conuented by reason the Constable of the castle, did mistake the deliuerie of the warrant to the Sheriffe till the date was out. Though she a senight before the time, had prepared her selfe, only to receiue the mercy of God, and terror of death, yet it pleased God otherwise a while to prolong her daies, which time giuen her, she did not vainely spend, but imploy her vttermost indeuors to obtaine mercie, and forgiuenes in such rare sort, as if I should discribe the perticulers thereof, it would not only be endlesse, and tedious, but I doubt, to the hearers and readers, it would be though incredable, for in her might be seene the true image of a penitent sinner, as the like hath not often in these daies beene seene, God showing his glory so aboundantlie, working her penitency, as to me, and many more, was most admirable. For if she espied in any one, of what calling or degree soeuer, that they wilfully or carelesly abused Gods holy ordinaunces, shee would reproue them for it, and curtiously intreate them to amend such and such abuses; though some disdained she should seeme so to doe, in regard of her owne former offence, though indeede none might better doe it then shee, hauing smarted euen at her soule for her sinnes. This is the frailnes of our flesh, we only disdaine not our afflicted brethren, but also there good admonitions: God of his mercy I beseech him giue vs grace, that we may sée into our fickle estates, and receiue willingly any reproofe that may tend to the good of our poore soules.

So by this meanes, as I showed you before, this Elizabeth Caldwell was still detained in prison till the nert Assise following, at what time Isabell Hall was indited, as

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an actor in this murder, and found guilty by the Iurie, condemned and executed. And Elizabeth Caldwell also receiued the death of execution at the same instant, though my Lady Cholmsley very worshipfull and louingly made earnest sute, vnto the Iudge for her depriue till the Assise following: ỹ which by no meanes would be granted. And she seeing her sute would not take effect, being very sorrowfull, like a kind Ladie, went vnto Elizabeth Caldwell her selfe, and showed her she could not therein preuaile for her.

Indeede my Lady and others had an intent, if they could haue got her repriue, to haue vsed meanes to the King for a petition, but seeing it would not be, Elizabeth dutifully yéelded thanks vnto her Ladiship; and said shée was very well content to receiue the death ordained for her. My Lady departed, and she practising her former exercises, I meane prayer, vntill such time as the Keeper came and told her the Shrieffe was come to the Glouers-stone, to receiue her and the rest of the prisoners appointed for death: and she very chéerefully aunswered, I trust in my God I am ready, and farewell to the Lawe, too long haue I béene in thy subiection: & so departing the castell, taking leaue with euery one, and from hence to the place of execution, she some times sung Psalmes, and vsed other godly meditations, as was thought fitting for her, by those Diuines and godly Preachers, which accompanied her euen to her death.

A Letter written by *Elizabeth Caldwell* to her Husband, during the time of her imprisonment.

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ALthough the greatnes of my offence deserues neither pitie nor regarde, yet giue leaue vnto your poore sorrowfull wife to speake vnto you, what out of her owne wofull experience, with aboundance of griefe and teares, she hath learned in the Schoole of affliction, it is the last fauour that I shall euer beg at your hands, and the last office that euer I shall performe vnto you. And therfore deere Husband, if you haue, any hope or desire, to bee partaker of the ioyes of heauen, let my speeches finde acceptance, and doe not slightly esteeme what I write vntó you, but reade these lines againe, and againe, and lay them vp in your hart, where I beseech Almightie God they may take deepe roote, and impresion. For my witnesse is in heauen, that my harts desire and earnest prayer to GOD is, that your soule may be saued. And if the losse of my blood, or life, or to endure any torments that the world can inflict vpon me, might procure your true conuersion, I should esteeme it purchased at an easie rate: but sith none can haue saluation without true Reformation, both inward, and outward, amendement, in changing the affection, words, and works,

workes, from euill to good, which till you feele in your ſoule & conſcience to be effectually wrought, you haue not repented, defer not time, but call to God for grace of true Repentance, which may be found euen in this accepted time, when the doores of Gods mercy are open, that ſo he may haue mercie on you, leaſt he giue you ouer to hardneſſe of hart, that you cannot repent: and ſo you knocke with the fooliſh virgins, when the date of Gods mercies are out, and then nothing but woe, woe, and vengeance: therefore the longer you deferre, the harder it will be for you to repent: and delayes are moſt dangerous, for what know you how ſuddenlie, death may ſtrike you, and then, as the tree falls, ſo it lies, that is, as you die, ſo ſhall you haue, if in true repentance, ioy, if in your ſinnes, ſorrow. Therefore ſaith *Salomon*, All that thy hand ſhall finde to doe, doe it withall thy power, for there is neither worke, nor knowledge, inuention, nor wiſedome in the graue whether thou goeſt.

O husband, be not deceiued with the world, & thinke that it is in your power to repent when you will, or that to ſay a fewe prayers from the mouth outward a little before death, or to cry God mercie for faſhion ſake, is true repentance. No, no, not euerie one that ſaith Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heauen, ſaith our Sauiour, Late repentance is ſildome true, & true repentance is not ſo eaſie a matter to come by, as the word doth iudge. Doe not preſume on it, and ſo runne on in your ſinfull courſe of life, & thinke to repent when

you liſt, you can not doe it, for repentance is the rare gift of GOD, which is giuen but to a verie fewe, euen to thoſe that ſeeke it, with many teares, and verie earneſtlie with feruent prayers. None can better ſpeake of it, for none better knowes it then my ſelfe, my ſorrowfull hart hath ſmarted for it, and my ſoule hath beene ſick to the gates of hell, and of death to finde it: and to haue it, is more precious then all the world, therefore ceaſe not to pray day and night with the prophet, Turne thou vs vnto thee, ô Lord, and we ſhall be turned, and with *Ephraim*, conuert thou mee, ô Lord, and I ſhall bee conuerted: for except you be conuerted, you ſhall not enter into the kingdome of heauen.

And becauſe none can be conuerted, nor come vnto Chriſt except the Father drawe him, neuer leaue to ſolicite the Father of mercy to create a new hart, and renewe a right ſpirit within you, and call to remembrance the deſoluteneſſe of your life, I ſpeake it not to lay any thing to your charge, for I doe loue you more deerely, then I doe my ſelfe, but remember in what a caſe you haue liued, howe poore you haue many times left me, how long you haue beene abſent from mee, all which aduantage the deuill tooke to ſubuert mee. And to further his purpoſe, he ſet his helliſh inſtruments a work, euen the practiſe of wicked people, who continuallie wrought vpon my weaknes, my pouertie, and your abſence, vntill they made me yeeld to conſpire with them the deſtruction of your bodie, by a violent & ſuddaine death; which God in his great mercy preuented, and on the knees of my hart, in the abun-

dance

dance of his compaſsion, I beſeech him to forgiue vs all, & waſh our ſoules in the blood of his Chriſt, and to open the eyes of your vnderſtanding, that you may ſee by my example, which the prouidence of God, for ſome ſecrete cauſe beſt knowne to him ſelfe, hath appointed to come to paſſe. How weake and wretched wee are, and how vnable to ſtand of our ſelues, when it ſhall pleaſe him to take his grace from vs, and to leaue vs to our ſelues. Therefore good husband, as you tender the welfare of your ſoule, goe no further on in your ſinfull race, but turne vnto the Lord, & ſo ſhall you ſaue your ſoule aliue. If you continue in your abhominations, and ſhut your eares againſt the worde of Exhortation, you cannot haue any hope of ſaluation, for the booke of God is full of iudgements againſt wilfull ſinners, and mercie is to them that repent & turne.

Therefore I beſeech you vſe no delay, deferre no time, but preſently bee acquainted with the Scriptures, for they will leade you to eternall life: make haſt, euen before your hands part with this paper to ſearch therein, that ſo you may truly vnderſtand the wretched eſtate, & condition of thoſe, who following the luſts of there eyes, wallow in all ſenſualitie, and ſo heape vp vengance againſt the day of wrath: euen heauie Iudgments, no leſſe then condemnation both of ſoule and body. As *Salomon* ſaith, *Reioyce O young man in thy youth, & let thy hart cheare thee, in the daies of thy youth, and walke in the waies of thy hart, and in the ſight of thine eyes, but knowe that for all things God will bring thee to Iudgement.* Remember he ſpared not the Angells when

they ſinned, but caſt them downe into hell, nor of the old world but eight onely eſcaped, the reſt were drowned in their ſinnes becauſe they would not be warned. *Baltaſar*, ſayth *Daniell*, expounding the fearefull viſion of the hands writing, when hee was banqueting with his Concubines, thou art wayed in the Ballance, and are found light.

Theſe and many more are written for our admonition, vppon whom the ends of the world are come, ſearch for them, and I pray God you may be warned by them, and that you may ſeeke the Lord now while hee may bee found, and call vppon him while he is neere. Behold now the day of ſalvation, euen now, when he in mercy offereth himſelfe vnto vs, by preaching of his word, receiue not theſe graces in vaine, but redeeme your time, and runne vnto the houſe of God, and there in the great congregation, power foorth your plaint, with obedience heare the word of God, and indeuour to practiſe what you heare in your conuerſation, for the doores onely ſhall bee iuſtified at the laſt day, the word muſt iudge vs, in this life it worketh effect, for which it was ſent: it either conuerts or hardens, it is the ſauour of life, vnto life, or of death, vnto death, it is offered to all: to thoſe that imbrace it, it brings life, to thoſe that will not be reformed by it, it brings death, to thoſe that loue and deſire it, it is the quicking ſpirit, to thoſe that refuſe it, it is the killing Letter, it is no ſpeciall argument of God his fauour vnto any, vnleſſe they feele the power thereof working reformation in them, then it is the power of his ſpirit, the pledge of his bleſſing. Ignoraunce

rance must nooo excuse you, for the Prophet saith, my people languish for want of knowledge, and knowledge without practise, leaues all men without excuse; for hee that knoweth his maisters will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many strips: therefore make more conscience of the word of God, then you haue done, and loue his Messengers, the Preachers that brings that glad tidings, for to loue them is to loue Christ, and to hate them, is to hate Christ, as our Sauiour saith, *he that dispiseth you, dispiseth me*, and it is hard to kick against the prick. And loue the children of God that professe Christ Iesus, for hereby shall men know me, that you are my Disciples, if you loue one another saith our Sauiour. And for the Saboth day, bee yee assured, that the Lord of heauen, hath not in vaine chosen it to himselfe, commanding vs to Sanctifie it vnto his holy name, no, no, if euer we desired to be partakers of the spirituall Saboth in heauen, whereof ours on earth is but a tipe, and a figure, then must we striue to keepe the same Saboth on earth as much as in vs lyes, which the Saints keepe in heauen: they are at rest from those labours that mortality is subiect vnto, and vncessantly sing prayses vnto the Lamb, so should we rest that day from the labours of our calling, and spend the whole day in hearing of the word preached, praysing the Lord publickly in the great congregation, priuatly at home with our families, preferring such other holy exercises, as may tend to the glory of God, the comfort of our soules, & the good of others, which we are bound to performe so straightly, as that we may not that day, be

alowed to speake such words, as concerne of vocations. And how soeuer it please the world, to thinke of the great God of heauen, and of the sanctifying of the Saboths, yet be you assured he is a iealous God, and will visite sinners, and one seede of his word, shall not be lost; but he will be glorified by it either in the saluation of those, who in a good conscience willingly indeuour to sanctifie them, or in the condemnation of those who wilfully oppose themselues against his blessed ordinance, to prophane them: which is one of the crying sinnes of this land, wherewith the whole Kingdome is infected: and if there were not some fewe to stand in the gap, for whose sake the Lord doth spare the rest, it had not beene posible, we should so long haue escaped his heauy iudgements.

O deere husband, the Lord hath long since taken his sword in his hand, to execute his vengance against all disobedient wretches, who turne the Saboth of the Lord, into a day of wantonnes, liberty, and licentiousnes, and although in his great mercy he doth yet forbeare to proceede to iudgement, as it were in great mercy, waiting our repentance, yet there will suddainely come a day of reckoning, altogether: and the wicked make the patience of our God an occasion to commit sinne, and prophanes, yet let them knowe, the Lord will take vengance of his aduersaries, and reserue wrath for his enemies, and though hee be slowe to anger, yet is he great in power, and will not surely cleare the wicked: though he defer the Sessions, yet they will come, and though he haue Leaden feete, yet hath he Iron

hands,

hands; though but the fier light not vppon *Sodome* all the euening, yet it came. Doe not therefore prouoke the Lord any longer by your prophanes, for he is strong, readie to punnish, and hath promised, that the person that dispiseth his words, shalbe cut of. Did hee not commaunde a man to be stoned to death, for gathering a fewe sticks on the Saboth day, and is hee not still the same God? yes certaine, his arme is not shortned if we wilfully persist in our disobedience.

Sixe market dayes hee hath giuen vs, to prouide vs necessaries for our bodies, and but one hath hee chosen for himselfe to be a day of holines, which is the market day for the soule, wherein wee should prouide vs of comforts for the whole weeke. The excellencie and woorth of this day is vnspeakable to those that sanctifie it. It is the badge and liuerie whereby they are knowne to bee the seruaunts of God: to those that prophane it, in spending the day in worldly pleasures, drunkennes & filthinesse, it is the certaine badge and liuerie, whereby they are knowne to be the seruants of the deuill, according to the sayings of the Apostle; *knowe you not vnto whomsoeuer ye giue your selues as seruants to obey, his seruants yee are, to whom yea obey, whether it be of sinne vnto death, or of obedience vnto righteousnes.*

If my people will sanctifie my Saboth, saith the Lord, it shall be a signe betweene me and them, that they may knowe that I ame the Lord there God; and blessed are they who haue the Lord for their God. So that to those that prophane the Saboth, the Lord is not their God, but the deuill: and cur-

sed

sed are the people that are in such a case, therefore deere husband, deferre no time, put not of from day, to day, to turne vnto the Lord, nether be you deceiued, for God is not mocked, the longer you runne on, the more you set on the score, and such as you sowe, such shall you reape: for the Lord hath sayd, He that heareth my words, and doth blesse himselfe in hart, saying, I shall haue peace, although I walke according to the stubbernes of my hart, thus adding drunkennes to thirst, the Lord will not bee mercifull vnto him, but the wrath of the Lord, & his iealosie, shall smooke against that man, and euery curse that is written in this booke shall light vppon him, and the Lord shall put out his name from vnder heauen: but vnto them that repent, the Lord hath sayd, when the wicked turneth away from his wickednes, that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawfull and right, hee shall saue his soule aliue. You see the iudgements of God are begunne alreadie in your house, happie shall you be if you make a holy vse of them, otherwise heauior may be expected, especially, if you persist. In his mercy he hath spared you, and doth yet waite for your repentance, doe not you abuse his patience any longer, lest thereby you prouoke him to proceede to execution against you, but imbrace his mercy which is yet a offered vnto you: for which, that you may so do, I shall not cease, to pray whilst I liue, to him who onely is able to effect it, euen the Lord of heauen, who send vs ioyfull meeting at the day of our Resurrection.

Your poore wife
Elizabeth Caldwell.

The words of Eli-

zabeth Caldwell at the time of her death.

FIrſt ſhe deſired, that the Lord would giue a bleſſing vnto the ſpeeches that ſhe deliuered, ſ they might tend to the conuerting of many of the hearers, and alſo ſhe ſayd, that the word of God did not giue her any priuiledge, and authority to ſinne, but that it was her owne filthy fleſh, the illutions of the deuill, and thoſe helliſh inſtruments which he ſet on worke: yet notwithſtanding, ſhe euer had a deteſtation to thoſe ſinnes that ſhe liued in, but ſhe affirmed that ſhe wanted grace to auoyd them, therefore as ſhe had giuen a great ſcandall to the word of God, by profeſſing, and not practiſing the ſame, euen ſo ſhe deſired the great mercy of God, to forgiue her that ſinne, acknowledging that ſhe ſhoode to preſumptiouſly vpon her owne conceite, and grew too proud, boldning and ſwearing, that ſhe would neuer doe ſuch and ſuch things, but ſuddainly fell into the like againe.

Therfore ſhe gaue Saint Pauls admonition vnto euery one, Let him that thinketh he ſtands, take heede of a preſent fall; likewiſe ſhe exhorted all to the diligent obſeruation of the Sabboth day, ſaying, that one aſhes chiefe and

capitall sinnes was, the neglect thereof, and although the world did recon and esteeme it a small matter, yet she knewe it to be one of her greatest sinnes, wishing all people in the feare of God, to make a reuerent account of the Lords glorious Saboth, she complained much of adultery, and said it was that filthy sinne which was the cause of her death, and was perswaded in her conscience, that her afflictions was rather for that, then any murder shee euer committed: notwithstanding, shee yeelded her selfe culpable in concealing of it, manifesting that in regard of her sinnes, and iniquities, she deserued a thousand deaths, praying most earnestly vnto God, that her selfe might be a warning and example vnto all there present, wishing them most earnestly to serue the Lord, of what degree soeuer they were, if they were neuer so poore, but were forst to craue there liuing from doore to doore, which done, then were they happy creatures.

Then againe, she admonished all to keepe the Saboth, to goe to the church, and heare the word of God preached, for that was the only truth, and able to saue their soules. But as touching Papistrie, she euer hated it, knowing it contrary and flatly opposite against the truth of the great God of heauen, and his holy word, praying for the confution and desolution of the great whore of Babilon, but most deuoutly and sencerely, praying for the currant passage of the Gospell of Christ Jesus throughout the whole world, to the conuerting of thousands, desiring that the very stones of the streete might set foorth the glory of God: and withall, most religiously she prayed for the Kings most excellent Maiestie, and sayd she might call him her King while shee liued, that his sacred & royall Person, might be a bright shining lampe of Gods glory in the aduancement of the Gospell of Christ, and the ouerthrowe of poperie & superstition, in these his Kingdomes and dominions. Then made knowne that she could teach as the Preachers, for they taught as they found it in the word, and she was able to speake from a feeling hart, very

ry confidently affirming, that her sinnes were the greatest reason of the dulnes and hardnes of her hart, and the seperation of Gods mercies from her: and therefore she carefully aduised all to beware of sinne, because it was hateful and odious in the sight of God, and all reasonable creatures.

Concerning repentance, shee spake thus, that it was not in the power of man to repent when hee list, but the only gift of God, protesting before the Lord of heauen and earth, that during the time of her imprisonment, being a full yeare and a quarter, she had sought the Lord with many bitter teares, with broken and contrite hart, to see if his Maiestie would be intreated, and yet she found not such assurance as she desired: but auouched what she did, was done in simplicity of hart, whatsoeuer the world did other was censure. Moreouer, saying that in the mercies and merites of Christ Jesus, shee hoped her sinnes were pardoned, and sayd I beleeue Lord, helpe my vnbeliefe. Also she sayd, that in the time of her imprisonment, the Lord had beene very gracious and mercifull vnto her, for many the faithfull ministers, and deere seruants of Jesus Christ, had recourse vnto her, by whose meanes she had recouered great comforth, praying the Lord for the same: yet notwithstanding, the world most iniuriously did deride, scofe, and mock them, which was most wicked and abhominable: saying, that if there were fortie and two children deuoured for mocking the Prophet Eliza, what then shall befall of them that doe blaspheme the name of the great God of heauen, prophane his holy Sabboth, speake euill of his word, and abuse his faithfull Ministers. Therefore she desired all to turne from their sinnes, and to turne to the Lord by true and vnfained repentance, praying very earnestly for her husbands conuersion, and that her two children might haue the feare of God before their eyes, and that the glory of God might appeare in the conuersion of prisoners, though it were with the losse of her owne life, so infinite was her zeale.

Then shee prayed the Lord, that hee would pardon all her grieuous and heynous sinnes in the bloodshed of Christ Jesus, beseeching him to cleanse her from her secret sinnes: praying that she might be a Doore-keeper in the house of God, and receiue the meanest place of glory. Then said shee, that if the great and tall Ceaders of the Church of God haue fallen, as Dauid, Salomon, and Manasses, how then coulde shee stand, beeing but a bramble, and weake wretched woman. Therefore shee exhorted euery one to depend onely vpon the Lord, and not to stand vpon theyr owne strength as shee had done. And greatly then desiring all the people to pray vnto GOD for her, shee called for her Prayer booke, reading and praying zealouslie and deuoutly to Almighty GOD, with her eyes lift vp towards heauen; which done, shee requested that they would sing a Psalme, reading it her selfe, & singing with a good spirit, that afterwards she vttered that shee felt the mercies of GOD, and her soule was much comforted: and hoped, that in the blood of Christ Jesus her sinnes were pardoned: and saide shee coulde not amend that which was past: but was most hartily sorrowfull for her former sinnes: saying, that if shee shoulde liue yet many yeeres, her desire would be in seruing the Lord: therefore she desired him vpon the knees of her hart, that hee would respect the will for the deede, and accept her poore desires: saying, O suffer me yet once to recouer my strength, before I goe hence and be seene no more. Praying likewise for all those that ministred comforts vnto her in her misery and distresses, that the Lord would blesse them, and continue them faithfull vnto the end.

Then forgiuing, and asking forgiuenes of all, making her selfe ready, saying her bodily death did not dismay her, concluding with these her last words, Lord Jesus receiue my spirit: and so she left this miserable world, and dyed the true seruaunt of Jesus Christ, the xviij. day of June, 1603.

at the time of her death.

¶ Nowe yet againe remember our old beldame afore-named, that vncharitable creature Isabell Hall, widdow, beeing the onely instrument of this timelesse action: who standing on the Ladder, and ready to suffer for her fact, did notwithstanding very stoutly denie euery thing that had beene done in theyr late procedings, nay and abiurd it, had not Elizabeth Caldwell with affirmation of all inserted her confession in that behalfe: Who with an easie repentance to the worlds eye, ended her life. Whereby may be seene how strong the deuill in some actions is, that shee by whose instigation all was done, both in the adulterie and murder, would so impudently deny euery particuler, notwithstanding the triall of the cause both manifested by Judge and Jurie. But thus we see the boldnes of sinne, and the coldnesse of the truth, till God in mercie makes plaine the truth of the one, and the wonder of the other. All which tending to the example of others, may moue vs to liuely repentance, which not done, saluation cannot come, but truly effected, besides both the comfort of the soule and body. To which comfort, God in mercy bring vs for his sonne Jesus Christ his sake.

FINIS.

To the right honourable, and his ſinguler good Lady, the Lady *Mary Chandois*, R. A. wiſheth health and euerlaſting happineſſe.

MY honourable and very good Lady, conſidering my dutie to your kind Ladiſhip, & remembring the vertues of your prepared minde, I could doe no leſſe but dedicate this ſtrange worke to your view, being both matter of moment and truth. And to the whole world it may ſeeme ſtrange, that a Gentlewoman ſo vvell brought vp in Godsfeare, ſo well married, ſo vertuous euer, ſo ſuddainly wrought to this act of murder; that when your Ladiſhip doth read aſwell the Letter as the Booke, of her owne indighting, you will the more wonder that her vertues coulde ſo aptly taſt the follies of vice and villanie. But ſo it was, and for the better proofe that it was ſo, I haue placed my kinſmans name to it, who was preſent at all her troubles, at her comming to priſon, her beeing in priſon, and her going out of priſon to execution. That theſe Gentlemen to whom he dedicates his worke witneſſed, may alſo be pertakers in that kind, for the proofe thereof, that your Ladiſhip & the

the world ſo ſatisfied, may admire the deede, and hold it as ſtrange as it is true.

We haue many giddie pated Poets, that coulde haue publiſhed this Report with more eloquence, but truth in plaine attire is the eaſier knowne: let fixion maske in Kendall greene. It is my qualitie, to adde to the truth, truth, and not leaſings to lyes. Your good Honor knowes *Pincks* poore hart, who in all my ſeruices to your Late deceaſed kind Lord, neuer ſauoured of flatterie, or fixion: and therefore am now the bolder to preſent to your vertues, the view of this late truth, deſiring you to ſo thinke of it, that you may be an honourable mourner at theſe obſequies, and you ſhall no more doe, then manie more haue doone. So with my tendered dutie, my true enſuing ſtorie, and my euer wiſhing well, I do humbly commit your Ladiſhip to the priſon of heauen, wherein is perfect freedome.

Your Ladiſhips euer
in duty and ſeruice,
Robert Armin.

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